1:Dobrizhoffer M-5 (ca. 1760) 1822
SI4 Abipon SI4

147 corporal inconvenience. The Abipones are
151 highly sensible of the impressions of the elements, the injuries of weapons, and the pain arising from these causes, but are not so much overcome and exhausted by them as most others, either because they are blessed with a better temperature of blood and humours, and greater strength of limbs and muscles, or because the hardships they have been accustomed to from childhood, render them callous, or because their eager thirst after military fame impels them to deny that anything gives them pain, though they be ever so much affected by it.

145 I have already observed that they seldom grow bald, and not grey till at an advanced period of life. Even when arrived at extreme age they can hardly be said to have grown old; like certain plants which are always green and vigorous. Cicero, in his treatise on Old Age, bestows great praise on Massinissa, king of Mauritania, who, at ninety years of age, *cùm ingressus iter pedibus sit, in equum omninò non ascendit: cùm equo, ex equo non descendit. Nullo imbre, nullo frigore adducitur, ut capite operto sit. Exequitur omnia regis officia et munera, &c.* The
145 Roman orator would find all the old Abipones
887 so many Massinissas, or even more vigorous than Massinissa. He would scarce believe his

1:Dobrizhoffer M-5 (ca. 1760) 1822
SI4 Abipon SI4
GUARANI SM4

own eyes were he to see men, almost a hundred years old, leap on to a fiery horse, without the aid of a stirrup, like a boy of twelve years old, sit it for hours, and even whole days, beneath a burning sun, climb trees for honey, travel or lie upon the ground in cold or rainy weather, contend with the enemy in battle, shrink from no toils of the army or the chase, evince wonderful acuteness both of sight and hearing, preserve all their teeth quite sound, and seem only to be distinguished by the number of their years from men in the prime of life. All these things will hardly be credited in Europe where they are so rare. In the colonies of the Abipones I daily beheld old men, like youths in every other respect but that of age, without surprize. If a man dies at eighty he is lamented as if cut off in the flower of his age. Women generally live longer than men, because they are not killed in war, and because the moistness of their nature renders them more long lived. You find so many old women a hundred years of age, amongst the Abipones, that you may wonder at, but will scarce be able to count them. I cannot say that the pedestrian nations of Paraguay enjoy equal strength and longevity. The Guaranies, Lules, Isistines, Vilelas, and other pedestrian Indians, are subject to diseases like the Europeans, and

145 887 165 GU 165 [164]

1:Dobrizhoffer M-5 (ca.1760) 1822
SI4 Abipon SI4
GUARANI SM4

spirits of wine. Some prick the gum of the tooth with the spine of the fish raya, and by eliciting blood, allay the pain. Others again reduce tigers' claws and alum first into a calx, and then into a powder, by laying them on hot coals, and after they are well mixed up together, apply them to the hollow of the tooth. By the adoption of this method, many, beside myself, have found not only the pain, but the cause of the pain so entirely removed, that it never returned afterwards. Tooth-ache is a frequent and dreadful affliction to Europeans in Paraguay, on account of the scarcity or unskilfulness of surgeons. In extracting the diseased tooth, they pierce and lacerate the whole gum near it, which causes extreme pain, together with much effusion of blood. That the Abipones never need the aid of these torturers, is a truly enviable part of their felicity. I never saw a toothless person amongst them. The teeth, which they have made strenuous use of all their lives, generally go with them to the grave.

Whenever they feel themselves unwell, although the complaint be in the foot or the elbow, they always say that their heart pains them. The same is the case with the Guaranies. If you say to the sick man, what ails you, what is the matter with you? he immediately